

Northeast Drift Gillnet Fishery

Fishing gear type: Gillnet

Current category: Category II*

Basis of current classification on the LOF: Based on analogy to other Northeast gillnet fisheries that use similar gear and operate in a similar manner to this fishery.

Current list of marine mammal species/stocks injured/killed: None documented.

Estimated number of current participants: 608

Take Reduction Teams/Plans that affect this fishery: Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan (ALWTRP), 50 CFR 229.32.

Year added to the LOF: 2001

Category when originally listed under current fishery name: Category II

Basis for original classification on the LOF: This fishery was categorized as a Category II based on analogy with other gillnet fisheries and a recommendation by the Atlantic Scientific Review Group (SRG) to place this fishery in Category II. The fishery was added to the LOF to ensure that drift gillnet fisheries for target fish species other than large pelagic species were included on the LOF. This fishery does not include any sink gillnet fishing in Category III inshore gillnet fisheries.

Estimated number of participants when originally listed: Unknown

Past names, if any: None.

Gear description/method for fishing: This fishery uses drift gillnet gear, which is gillnet gear not anchored to the bottom and is free-floating on both ends or free-flowing at one end and attached to the vessel at the other end. Mesh sizes are likely less than those used to target large pelagics.

Target species: This fishery targets species including shad, herring, mackerel, and menhaden and any residual large pelagic driftnet effort in New England.

Spatial/temporal distribution of effort: The fishery includes any residual large pelagic driftnet effort in New England and occurs at any depth in the water column from the U.S.-Canada border to Long Island, New York, at 72° 30'W. long. south to 36° 33.03'N. lat. (corresponding with the Virginia-North Carolina border) and east to the eastern edge of the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

Levels of observer coverage each year[†] During the period 1990-2007, estimated observer coverage (number of trips observed/total commercial trips reported) for Northeast sink gillnet, Northeast anchored float gillnet, and Northeast driftnet fisheries was 1%, 6%, 7%, 5%, 7%, 5%, 4%, 6%, 5%, 6%, 6%, 4%, 2%, 3%, 6%, 7%, 4%, and 7%, respectively.

* The fishery is classified by analogy to other gear types or fisheries that are known to cause mortality or serious injury of marine mammals.

[†] Observer coverage levels include the latest information reported in the most current final Stock Assessment Report (SAR).

Management and regulations: The fishery is managed under the Interstate Fishery Management Plans (ISFMPs) for Atlantic Menhaden and Shad (managed by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission [ASMFC]) and is subject to ALWTRP implementing regulations. A total closure of the American shad ocean intercept fishery was fully implemented in January, 2005.

History of Changes on the LOF

2011 LOF:

- Updated the fishery description to clarify the target species for this fishery. The fishery definition provided in the 2008 Proposed LOF included language excluding large pelagic species from the species targeted. However, this fishery does include any residual large pelagic drift gillnet effort.
- Estimated number of participants updated from unknown to 608. This estimation may be an inflation of actual effort; however, it represents the potential effort for the fishery, given the multiple gear types several state permits may allow for.

2009 LOF: Clarified the boundary description of the fishery adding the following language (in italics), "...at any depth in the water column from the U.S.- Canada border to Long Island, New York, at 72° 30'W. long. south to 36° 33.03'N. lat. (corresponding with the Virginia-North Carolina border) and east to the eastern edge of the EEZ.

2008 LOF: Updated the fishery description to reflect that this fishery is now subject to ALWTRP implementing regulations under an October 5, 2007, rulemaking (72 FR 57104, October 5, 2007).

2007 LOF:

- Reworded the description of the fishery to align better with management boundaries under the ALWTRP by removing "...from the Maine-Canada border through the waters east of 72° 30'W..." and replaced the text with "...from the U.S.-Canada border to Long Island, NY, at 72° 30'W. long. south to 36° 33.03'N. lat. and east to the eastern edge of the EEZ..."
- Added to target species: shad, herring, mackerel, and menhaden.

2006 LOF: Added a superscript "2" in Table 2 after this fishery, indicating that it is categorized by analogy.

2001 LOF: Shad added as a target species in this fishery as a result of the deletion of the "Gulf of Maine, Southeast U.S. Atlantic Coastal shad, sturgeon fishery" from the LOF.